

Dear Commissioner Copps,

Thank you for coming to North Carolina recently for your FCC Public Hearing. While I was unable to personally attend, thanks to the internet, I have viewed the hearing via RealVideo.

I write to voice my opinion as a professional broadcaster since 1972. I've held every position in the radio business with the exception of sales. Over the years, I have seen radio go downhill rather quickly, ever since massive group ownership was approved. Your visit to Raleigh Durham is a perfect example...what once was a thriving multiple-owner market has now dwindled down to 3 basic players, with others left to pick up the pieces. The Greenville-New Bern market is even worse...they basically have 2 groups running the majority of the radio stations. This is wrong on SO MANY levels.

News has now taken a back seat...in Raleigh-Durham there is really only 1 radio news department. That news department is providing news to 13 stations. That is not diverse coverage. When major disasters strike, the other major players merely simulcast the audio of TV stations. There is no local news outlet in the Greenville-New Bern market.

Advertisers are given a "take it or leave" it approach to sales. This does not give local advertisers a chance to get their messages out at a fair price, thus affecting their ability to stay in business.

Music controlled by Big Brother...there is no local input. Clear Channel can literally make or break an artist by not playing their songs on their huge network of stations, plus they control the major entertainment venue at Alltel Pavilion, and billboards.

Ownership is my biggest beef. I grew up and worked my way up the career ladder in hopes of eventually owning my own station; however, now that dream will probably never become a reality. Because of the limited number of stations now available, the price for a station has skyrocketed to the point where only large corporations can own and operate stations. The AM dial has become a vast wasteland of over-modulated gospel stations or worthless Travels Information stations with information that is usually outdated or worthless. Thank God that Rush Limbaugh has continued to be as successful as he is. I fear when Rush retires, the AM dial will die with him. FM is now nationally programmed with little to no diversity.

Consolidation of radio is about to kill it.

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